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SIXTH RSFSR CONFERENCE ON ANTITULAREMIA MEASURES

The Sixth All-Russian Conference on Tularemia, organized by the Ministry of Public Health RSFSR, took place in Moscow on 17-19 February 1953. At this conference were presented summaries of scientific and practical measures taken during the past 7 years for the prevention of tularemia.

More than 200 persons participated in the conference, including specialists from RSFSR antitularmia stations, scientific collaborators from the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR, the Saratov and Rostov institutes of the Ministry of Public Health USSR, and other scientific research institutions, and workers active in the antitularmia networks of the Ukrainian SSR, Belorussian SSR, Kazakh SSR, and Moldavian SSR.

V. I. Vashkov, Deputy Minister of Public Health RSFSR, stated in his report that the public health organs of the RSFSR have substantially fulfilled the assigned tasks in connection with the introduction of antitularmia measures. This is confirmed by the fact that there has been a considerable reduction in the incidence of tularemia during recent years.

The network of antitularmia stations has expanded and their equipment and personnel have improved. Planning of antitularmia measures and the control over their execution have improved considerably. In a number of oblasts antitularmia inoculation of the whole population of areas which contain enzootic foci is near realization. This measure has played a predominant role in lowering the incidence of tularemia.

At a number of antitularmia stations (Moscow, Tula, Voronezh, Stalingrad, etc.) scientific research which advances the prophylaxis of tularemia is being conducted in addition to work of a practical nature. Besides bringing out the points mentioned above, Vashkov discussed the shortcomings of the antitularmia work done in several oblasts. These shortcomings include inadequate organization of inoculations, the fact that these inoculations are carried out too late, faulty accounting, defective records in regard to inoculations, and inadequate training in problems pertaining to tularemia of workers active in the network of therapeutic organizations, so that diagnostic errors occur.

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Vashkov further remarked that in oblasts where no antitularemia stations exist, antitularemia measures are being carried out less energetically, while variations in the number of rodents and outbreaks of tularemia epizootics among them are not being observed at all.

In the subdivision on "Regional Epidemiology and the Results of the Fight with Tularemia," reports were presented by A. A. Zaytsev, chief physician of the Pyatigorsk Antitularemia Station; Yu. A. Myasnikov, chief physician of the Tula Antitularemia Station; and others. These reports have demonstrated that a number of antitularemia stations define and correctly solve problems of regional epidemiology and epizootology, and that they skillfully use the results obtained in solving these problems when they apply antitularemia measures.

The reports given by V. P. Borodin, chief physician of the Stalingrad Antitularemia Station, and M. Ye. Badalov, chief physician of the Rostov Antitularemia Station, dealt with the organization of antitularemia measures at the sites of the largest hydro-construction works.

The conference noted that as far as the majority of problems dealing with investigation of the tularemia infection and with measures for the prophylaxis of tularemia are concerned, priority in this field deservedly belongs to Soviet scientists. In work done by N. A. Gayskiy, B. Ya. El'bert, N. G. Olsuf'yev, I. N. Mayskiy, V. S. Sil'chenko, and other scientists and practical workers, it has been established that inoculation with live tularemia vaccine produces a sufficiently high immunity for a period of no less than 5 years. This finding determines the periods of reinoculation.

Extensive work has been done by O. S. Yemel'yanova, I. N. Mayskiy, and others on the modification of the causative factor of tularemia. This work was conducted from the standpoint of the theory of phase [stage] development of bacteria. The problem of pathogenesis and immunogenesis of tularemia is being successfully studied by T. N. Dunaeva, I. N. Mayskiy, and A. V. Mashkov. USSR scientists (G. P. Rudnev, N. G. Olsuf'yev, Ye. M. Fyvetkova, G. P. Uglova and G. A. Savel'yeva) have developed and applied clinically a new and effective method for the treatment of tularemia with domestic streptomycin. On the basis of Academician Ye. N. Pavlovskiy's theory of natural foci of transmissible diseases, investigation of natural foci of tularemia has been carried out under the direction of Prof. N. G. Olsuf'yev. From the standpoint of the results obtained, measures for making these foci innocuous were indicated. Methods of forecasting the numbers of small rodents of the mouse type were devised (N. P. Naumov) and procedures for combating these rodents are being developed (V. V. Kucheruk, V. G. Polezhayev, and others).

The conference noted the significant scientific work accomplished by the Tularemia Laboratory, Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology [imeni Gamaleya], Academy of Medical Sciences USSR, and the extensive methodological aid given by this laboratory to practical workers at antitularemia stations. The conference called attention to the still inadequate work of agricultural organs in combating rodents and ticks and noted that the Ministry of Agriculture was not participating in the conference.

The Ministry of Public Health RSFSR, in connection with its direction of the network of antitularemia stations, was criticized at the conference. It was pointed out that there was not a sufficient number of planned trips to the stations, that decisions in connection with accounts were not dispatched regularly, and that there was lack of contacts between the antiepidemic administrations and therapeutic administrations of the Ministry of Public Health as far as therapy and prophylaxis of tularemia are concerned.

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The Ministry of Public Health USSR was criticized for not assuring a sufficient supply of antitularemia vaccine for the oblasts in 1952 and during the first quarter of 1953.

The conference noted that the editorial board of Zhurnal Mikrobiologii, Epidemiologii, i Immunobiologii had accepted for publication work by [R. Ya.] Chernina and [M. V.] Vasil'yeva and by Vdovenko and Lang which had not been adequately checked and for that reason misled practical workers.

The conference outlined a number of important practical measures which would strengthen the fight against tularemia, contribute to the investigation of that infection, and reinforce the antitularemia service. The conference further stressed the desirability of holding an all-union conference on tularemia in 1956, so that the date of this conference would correspond to the 30th anniversary of the beginning of research on tularemia infection in the USSR.

The participants at the conference (particularly young specialists from antitularemia stations) exchanged experiences acquired in carrying out antitularemia measures, acquired a knowledge of the latest scientific achievements in work on tularemia problems, and received a basic orientation for further work on health protection.

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